

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of providing a program L time units in length
2 to a user, comprising the steps of:
3 storing a first segment of said program;
4 beginning the presentation of the stored first
5 segment of said program to the user;
6 receiving a second segment of said program at
7 least L time units after beginning to store the first
8 segment of said program; and
9 presenting to the user the second segment of said
10 program when the presentation of the first segment of said
11 program is completed.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 storing program data included in the second
4 segment of said program while presenting at least a portion
5 of the first segment of said program to the user.

1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 receiving program guide information; and
4 identifying, from the received program guide
5 information, a broadcast channel upon which the second
6 segment of said program is being broadcast.

1 4. The method of claim 3,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial program segment;

4 wherein the second segment of said program is a
5 main program segment; and

6 wherein the second segment of said program is
7 received as part of a periodic broadcast of said first and
8 second segments of said program.

1 5. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:
2 selecting, from a plurality of broadcast channels
3 upon which the second segment of said program is being
4 broadcast, one of said broadcast channels from which to
5 receive the second segment of said program.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of selecting
2 one of said broadcast channels includes the step of
3 selecting the first broadcast channel upon which the second
4 segment of said program will be transmitted at or following
5 the start of the presentation of the stored first segment
6 of said program to the user.

1 7. The method of claim 6,
2 wherein the maximum delay between broadcasts of
3 the second program segment during a fixed time interval is
4 C time units, the step of storing a first segment of said
5 program including the step of storing at least C time units
6 of video data; and
7 wherein $L > C$.

1 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the maximum delay
2 between broadcasts of the second program segment is C time
3 units, the step of storing a first segment of said program

4 including the step of storing at least Y time units of
5 video data, where $L > C \geq Y$.

1 9. The method of claim 6, wherein the method further
2 comprises the step of:

3 broadcasting the first segment of said program
4 which is stored, on a first communications channel, prior
5 to performing the storing step; and

6 broadcasting the second segment of said program
7 which is presented to the user on a second communications
8 channel prior to performing the receiving step.

1 10. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of storing
2 program data corresponding to the second segment of said
3 program includes the step of storing program data in a
4 portion of a cache which is operated as a first-in, first-
5 out data structure.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of:

2 beginning the presentation of the stored first
3 segment of said program to the user includes the steps of:

4 performing at least one of a descrambling
5 operation and a decrypting operation on at least some data
6 included in the first segment of said program; and

7 outputting video data generated as a function of
8 performing at least one of said descrambling operation and
9 decrypting operation to a presentation device.

1 12. A method of providing a program to a user, comprising
2 the steps of:

3 receiving on a first communications channel, a
4 first program segment;

5 storing the first segment of said program in a
6 storage device;

7 receiving a second program segment on a second
8 communications channel, the first and second program
9 segments corresponding to the same program; and

10 presenting to the user the second segment of said
11 program immediately following the presentation of the first
12 segment of said program.

1 13. The method of claim 12,

2 wherein the first and second communications
3 channels are different physical communication channels with
4 different carrier frequencies.

1 14. The method of claim 12,

2 wherein the first and second communications
3 channels are different logical communication channels
4 implemented using the same physical communications channel.

1 15. The method of claim 12,

2 wherein said program is a user selected program;
3 and

4 wherein the first segment of said program is one
5 of a first plurality of program segments transmitted on the
6 first communications channel, the method further comprising
7 the step of:

8 storing, in the storage device, additional
9 program segments included in the first plurality of program
10 segments; and

11 accessing information indicating which program
12 segments correspond to said user selected program.

1 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the accessed
2 information further includes information about the order in
3 which the segments corresponding to the user selected
4 program are to be presented.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the accessed
2 information indicates that a first one of the additional
3 program segments is to be presented immediately following
4 the second program segment, the method further comprising
5 the step of:

6 presenting to the user a first one of the
7 additional program segments immediately following the
8 presentation of the second program segment.

1 18. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step
2 of:

3 presenting to the user a second one of the
4 additional program segments immediately following the
5 presentation of the first additional program segment.

1 19. The method of claim 17,
2 wherein the first program segment is a regional
3 news segment, the second program segment is a non-regional
4 news segment, and the first additional program segment is a
5 regional news segment.

1 20. The method of claim 12, wherein the second program
2 segment is presented to the user without being stored in
3 said storage device.

1 21. The method of claim 12, wherein the first program
2 segment is a regional news segment, and the second program
3 segment is a non-regional news segment.

1 22. The method of claim 12,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial portion of a movie; and
4 wherein the second segment of said program is a
5 main portion of said movie, the initial and main portions
6 of said movie forming a complete version of said movie.

1 23. The method of claim 12, wherein the second segment of
2 said program is a regional advertising segment.

1 24. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 beginning the presentation of the stored first
4 segment of said program to the user at or prior to
5 performing the step of receiving a second segment of said
6 program.

1 25. The method of claim 24, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 storing at least a portion of the second program
4 segment prior to presenting the second program segment to
5 the user.

1 26. The method of claim 25,
2 wherein the first segment of said program is an
3 initial portion of a movie; and
4 wherein the second segment of said program is a
5 main portion of said movie, the initial and main portions
6 of said movie forming a complete version of said movie.

1 27. A method of presenting a program to an individual,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 operating a user device to record a broadcast of
4 an initial portion of the program;
5 receiving information about the time and channel
6 upon which copies of the program are broadcast;
7 operating the user device to detect a request to
8 view said program;
9 in response to the request to view said program,
10 operating the user device to begin presenting the initial
11 portion of the program to the individual using the recorded
12 initial portion of the program; and
13 operating the user device to obtain the data
14 corresponding to a remaining portion of said program from
15 one of said broadcast copies of said program.

1 28. The method of claim 27, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 accessing said information about the time and
4 channel upon which copies of the program are broadcast; and
5 selecting one of the broadcast copies from which
6 to obtain the data corresponding to the remaining portion
7 of said program as a function of the accessed information.

1 29. The method of claim 28, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 presenting the remaining portion of said program
4 to said individual immediately following the presentation
5 of the initial portion of the program.

1 30. The method of claim 28, wherein the step of operating
2 a user device to record a broadcast of an initial portion
3 of the program includes the step of:
4 recording the initial portion of said program in
5 a cache located on the premises of said individual.

1 31. The method of claim 30, further comprising the step
2 of:
3 operating a video server to broadcast to the
4 premises of multiple individuals, in a time staggered
5 manner, copies of the said program.

1 32. The method of claim 31, wherein the program is a movie
2 being provided as part of a pay per view service.

1 33. A method of providing regional and non-regional
2 program data to a plurality of users, the method comprising
3 the steps of:
4 broadcasting a plurality of regional program
5 segments;
6 operating a plurality of user devices to store
7 the regional program segments in a cache included in each
8 of the plurality of user devices;
9 broadcasting program segment information about a
10 plurality of regional programs, the program segment

11 information for each regional program indicating the
12 program segments included in the regional program;
13 broadcasting non-regional program segments after
14 operating the user devices to store the regional program
15 segments; and
16 operating the user device to present at least one
17 regional program segment to the user by presenting at least
18 one cached regional program segment and a broadcast non-
19 regional program segment to the user.

1 34. The method of claim 33, wherein the broadcast program
2 segment information further includes information about the
3 time at which each of the program segments included in a
4 regional program is to be presented.

1 35. The method of claim 34,
2 wherein the step of broadcasting a plurality of
3 regional program segments includes the step of operating a
4 satellite to transmit the regional program segments to the
5 user device; and
6 wherein the user device is a satellite receiver
7 located at the premises of one of a plurality of users.

1 36. The method of claim 33,
2 wherein the regional program segments are
3 regional news segments and wherein the non-regional program
4 segments are non-regional news segments.

1 37. The method of claim 33, wherein the regional program
2 segments are regional advertising segments and the non-
3 regional program segments are television program segments.

1 38. A user device for processing program data, comprising:
2 a receiver circuit for receiving broadcast
3 program data;
4 a program cache coupled to the receiver circuit;
5 means for identifying and storing in said program
6 cache initial portions of programs which are broadcast on a
7 periodic basis;
8 means for detecting user input requesting the
9 presentation one of the programs which are transmitted on a
10 periodic basis;
11 means for outputting a cached initial portion of
12 said user requested program in response to said user input
13 requesting the presentation of one of the programs; and
14 means for obtaining, from a periodic broadcast of
15 the user requested program which starts subsequent to
16 caching of the initial portion of said user requested
17 program, a remaining portion of said user requested
18 program; and
19 means for outputting the remaining portion of
20 said user requested program immediately following the
21 output of the cached initial portion.

1 39. The user device of claim 38, wherein the means for
2 obtaining, from a periodic broadcast of the user requested
3 program, a remaining portion of said user requested program
4 includes:
5 stored program guide information indicating the
6 channels on which said programs are transmitted on a
7 periodic basis and information on the time at which the
8 programs are broadcast.

1 40. The user device of claim 39, wherein the means for
2 outputting the remaining portion of said user requested
3 program includes;
4 means for caching data representing the remaining
5 portion of the program in the program cache in a first-in,
6 first-out data structure.

1 41. The user device of claim 39, further comprising:
2 means for transmitting requests to view a user
3 selected program.

1 42. A device for processing program segments, comprising:
2 a cache for storing program segments;
3 means for receiving on a first communications
4 channel, a first program segment;
5 a cache controller for storing the program
6 segment in the cache;
7 means for receiving a second program segment on a
8 second communications channel, the first and second program
9 segments corresponding to the same program; and
10 means for presenting to the user the second
11 segment of said program immediately following the
12 presentation of the first segment of said program.

1 43. The device of claim 42, further comprising:
2 means for accessing program information
3 indicating which program segments are included in said
4 program and the time at which at least one of the included
5 program segments will be broadcast.

1 44. The device of claim 42, wherein the program is a
2 movie, the first program segment is an initial portion of
3 the movie and second program segment is a main portion of
4 said movie.

1 45. The device of claim 43, wherein the program is a
2 regional news program, wherein the first program segment is
3 a regional news program segment; and wherein the second
4 program segment is a non-regional news program segment.

1 46. The device of claim 39, wherein the second program
2 segment is a regional advertising segment.

1 47. The device of claim 46, wherein the first program
2 segment is a television program segment.

1 48. A system for presenting a program to an individual,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 a server for broadcasting to the premises of
4 multiple individuals, in a time staggered manner, copies of
5 the program and information about the time and channel upon
6 which copies of the program will be broadcast;

7 a user device in communication with said server,
8 the user device including:

9 means for recording a broadcast of an
10 initial portion of the program;

11 means for receiving information about
12 the time and channel upon which copies of the
13 program are broadcast;

14 means for detecting a request from a
15 user to view said program;

16 means for presenting the recorded
17 initial portion of the program, in response to
18 the request to view said program, to the user;
19 and
20 means for obtaining the data
21 corresponding to a remaining portion of said
22 program from a copy of said program.

1 49. A system for providing regional and non-regional news
2 to a plurality of users, the system comprising:
3 a server for broadcasting a plurality of regional
4 news segments, non-regional news segments and program
5 information indicating the news segments included in each
6 of a plurality of non-regional news segments;
7 a plurality of user devices in communication with
8 said server, at least some of the user devices being
9 located at different subscriber premises which are
10 physically remote from each other and the server;
11 each of the plurality of said user devices
12 including:
13 a cache for storing regional news segments;
14 means for accessing the broadcast program segment
15 information to identify regional and non-regional news
16 segments which are included in a non-regional news program;
17 means for presenting at least one regional news
18 program by outputting at least one cached regional news
19 segment and by outputting, immediately following the output
20 regional news segment, at least one non-regional news
21 segment corresponding included in the same regional news
22 program as the output non-regional news segment.